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# Excavations at Stobi, 1970\*

JAMES WISEMAN AND DJORDJE MANO-ZISSI

PLATES 87-90

## I. INTRODUCTION

The ancient city of Stobi spreads over a low ridge in the northwest angle of the confluence of the two largest rivers in Yugoslavian Macedonia, the Vardar and the Crna, known in antiquity as the Axios and the Erigon. The valley of the Vardar has been one of the chief routes linking the middle Danubian region and Mediterranean lands from prehistoric times to the present, and the Crna is the natural route of access to the eastern Balkans from the Macedonian highlands and the Illyrian coast of the Adriatic. There was in Roman times an important road along the Crna connecting Stobi with the Via Egnatia at Heraclea Lynestis (ill. 1). Stobi, therefore, lay at the juncture of two major highways only about 100 miles north of Thessalonica and thus occupied a position of great military and commercial importance in the ancient world.

Although the ancient site was recognized by J. G. von Hahn and Leon Heuzey in the mid-nineteenth century, there were no excavations there until German soldiers initiated them during the First World War.<sup>1</sup> Systematic excavations were conducted at Stobi by the National Museum at Belgrade from

1924 to 1934, and work on a smaller scale continued until 1939 under the sponsorship of the Prince Paul Museum.<sup>2</sup> This early work concentrated on the Roman theater and on several large buildings of the fourth to sixth centuries after Christ. Most of these structures are located in the central and western part of the ancient city.

Since 1955 there have been occasional, short-term investigations, almost all within the limits of the earlier excavations. The work was undertaken largely in conjunction with conservation or salvage projects of the Conservation Institute of Macedonia. Among the more important results have been the discovery of several late Hellenistic graves below the courtyard of a large residence known as the Peristerias Palace and the recovery of archaic material in a deep test trench in the apse of the Civil Basilica, adjacent to the Basilica of the Quatrefoil Baptistery.<sup>3</sup>

Only a sketchy history of the city can be derived from the published accounts of the early excavations and from ancient literature. We know that Stobi was an important city of Paconia, perhaps as early as the sixth century B.C. Its location makes it a can-

\* The project is sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution and largely funded through its Foreign Currency Program. Other funds and material were provided by the Ford Foundation, whose generosity made possible the participation of several graduate students, and by the University of Texas at Austin. The authors of this report are Co-Directors of the excavations and Mr. Todor Gruev, Director of the National Museum of Titov Veles, is Administrative Director.

Other staff members in 1970 were: archaeologists: Dr. Blaga Aleksova, Director, Archaeological Museum, Skopje; Dr. E. Mott Davis, University of Texas at Austin; Dr. Elizabeth Gebhard, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle; Mr. Apostol Keramidčiev, Research Associate, Archaeological Museum, Skopje; Dr. Ivan Mikulčić, University of Skopje; Mr. Al B. Wesolowsky, University of Texas at Austin. Architects: Mr. A. G. Grulich, University of Oregon; Mr. Milorad Čorluka, Conservation Institute of Macedonia; Consultant in Architecture: Mr. William B. Dinsmoor, Jr., Athens, Greece. Draftsman: Mrs. M. Grulich. Museum staff: Mrs. Viktoria Sokolovska, Research Associate, Archaeological Museum, Skopje; Mrs. Lucy Wiseman, Austin, Texas. Technicians: Mrs. Nina Dimčeva, Member of Archaeological Museum, Skopje. Conservators: Mr. Djordje Georgievski and Mr. Živojin Vinčić, Conservation Institute of Macedonia. Photographers: Mr. Timothy Shropshire and Mrs. Elizabeth Shropshire, University of Texas at Austin.

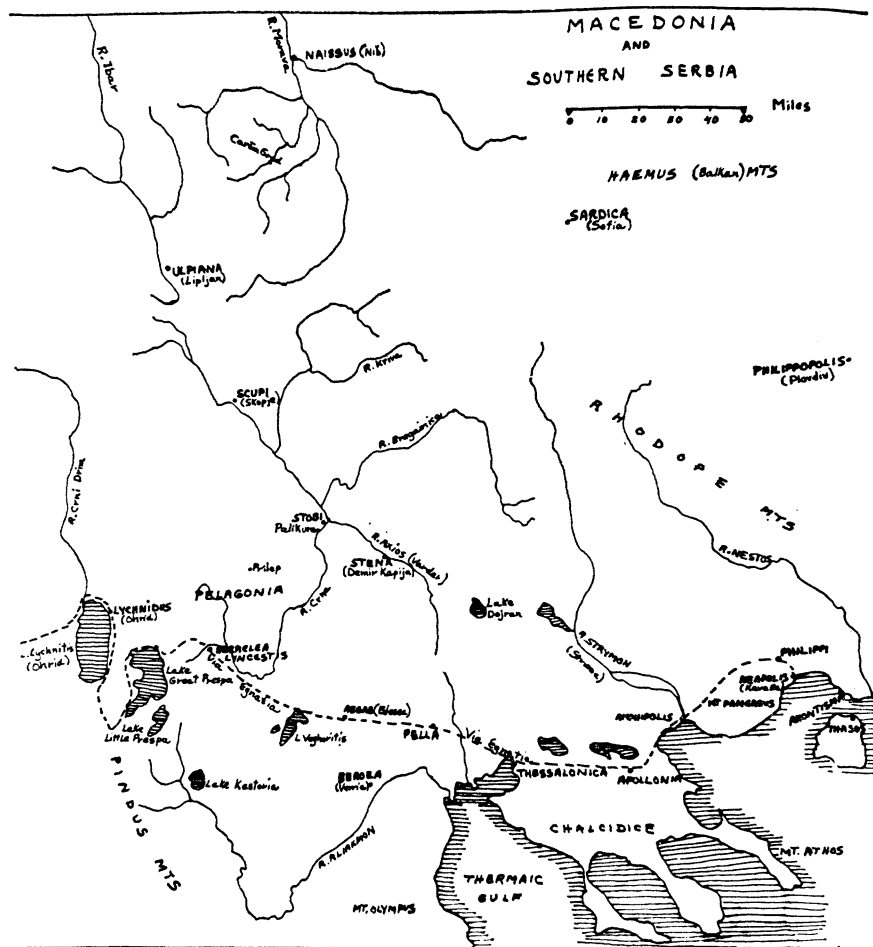
Student assistants were Miss Phyllis Della Croce and Mr.

Thomas Poyner, University of Texas at Austin; Miss Geraldine Gilligan, Tufts University; Miss Wendy Webb, State University of New York at Buffalo; Mrs. Marija Vincic, Skopje Academy of Arts; Mr. Žika Radošević, University of Belgrade, who also served as interpreter. All students from the United States were recipients of Ford Foundation Archaeological Traineeships. Our foreman was Mr. Kiro Kostevski of the Archaeological Museum at Skopje.

<sup>1</sup> J. G. von Hahn, "Reise von Belgrad nach Salonik," *DenkschrWien* (phil.-hist. Klasse) 11, pt. 2 (1861) 175, 231-236; 16, pt. 2 (1869) 160, 166. Leon Heuzey, "Découverte des ruines de Stobi," *RA* 2 (1873) 25-42; *Mission archéologique de Macédoine* (Paris 1876) 331-338. On the work of the German soldiers at Stobi during World War I, see n. 2 and infra sections 3 and 7.

<sup>2</sup> There is an excellent analytical survey, including bibliography, of works published on Stobi to 1943; Ernst Kitzinger, "A Survey of the Early Christian Town of Stobi," *DOPapers* 3 (1946) 81-161 (hereafter Kitzinger).

<sup>3</sup> *Arheološki Pregled* 1 (1959) 126; Dj. Mano-Zissi, "Pogled na pitanja urbanizacije i urbanizma u Ilirikumu," *Zbornik Narodnog Muzeja* 4 (1964) 98 n. 16. On archaic bronzes found before 1940 see Dj. Mano-Zissi, "K pitanju stratigraphije u Stobima," *Zbornik Narodnog Muzeja* 2 (1958-59) 355-357. On the Basilica of the Quatrefoil Baptistery, see infra n. 14.



ILL. 1. Map of Macedonia adapted from Hoddinott (infra n. 14) by Mrs. Virginia McKeen

didate for a community in still earlier times, but no trial trenches have yet tested the full depth of cultural remains at the site. Stobi passed under the control of the Macedonian kings at least by the time of Philip V, but perhaps even as early as the northern campaigns of Philip II in the mid-fourth century B.C.<sup>4</sup>

The city was a *municipium* during the early empire and minted its own coins from the time of the Flavian emperors until the reign of Elagabalus (A.D. 69-222);<sup>5</sup> it seems to have been a large and flourishing city at that time. During the later em-

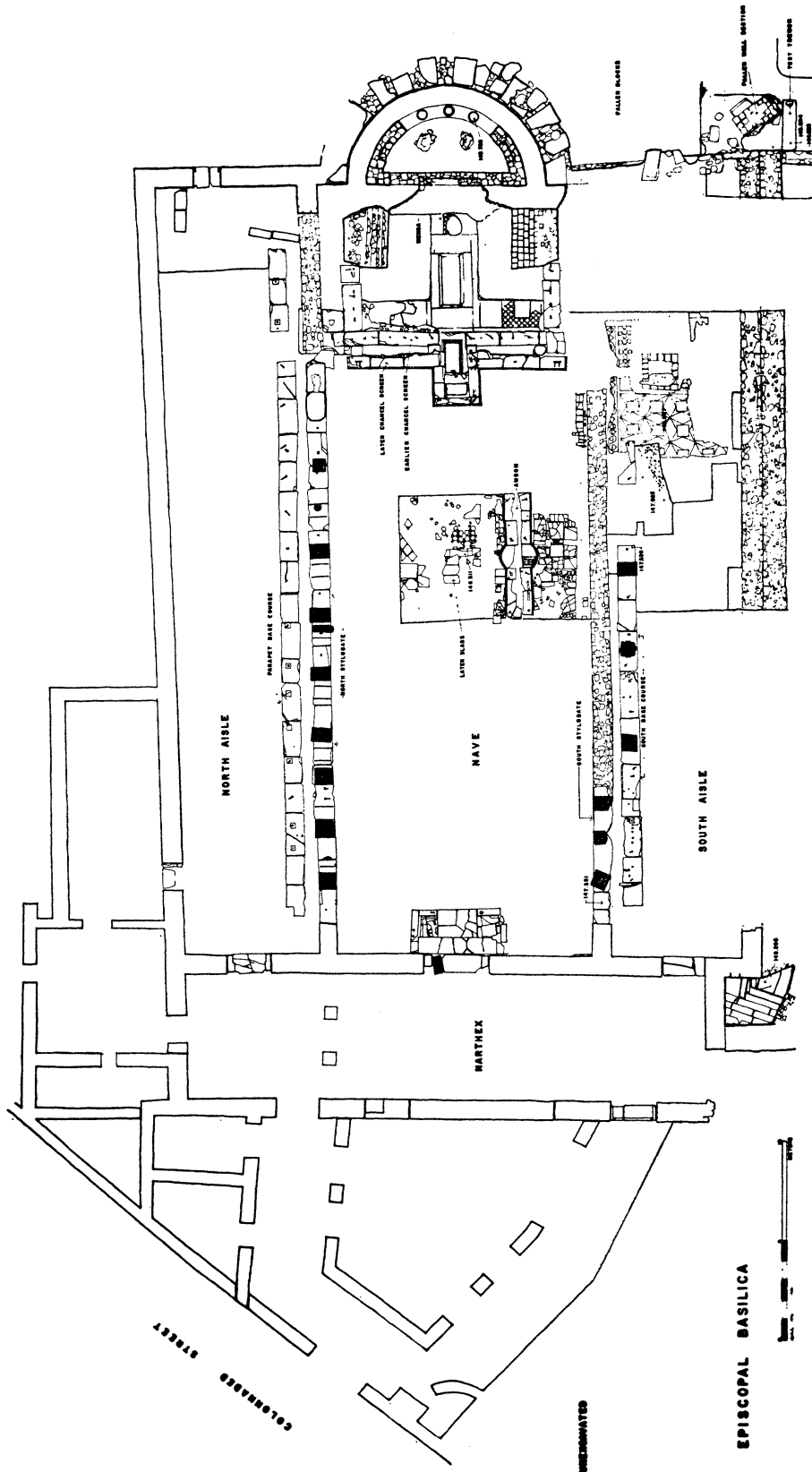
<sup>4</sup> A general history of Stobi with the ancient sources cited will be found in Balduin Saria, *RE* 4 A (1932) s.v. "Stobi," 47-54; cf. Kitzinger and F. Papazoglou, *Les cités Macédoniennes à l'époque romaine* (Skopje 1957) 235ff.

<sup>5</sup> Slobodan Dušanić, "A Foundation-Type on the Coinage of the Municipium Stobi," *RBN* 113 (1967) 11-29.

<sup>6</sup> The supposition that Stobi was raised to the rank of colony during the reign of Elagabalus was based on a statement of the

jurist Paulus (*Digest* 1.15.8) that the city enjoyed the *ius Italicum*. This was the view of all commentators on the subject (see, e.g., Kitzinger 148 and Saria [supra n. 4] 49) until a recent study by F. Papazoglou, "Natpis iz Nemezojona i datovanje Stobskog pozorišta," *Živa Antika* 1 (1951) 279-293. Papazoglou showed that Stobi must have received the right before the time of Elagabalus and while still a *municipium*. See also Dušanić (supra n. 5) 25-28. Some scholars have either

pire Stobi may have been even more prosperous. Several palatial residences and baths of this period (fourth-fifth century) were partially cleared in the earlier excavations, as well as the elaborately decorated Episcopal Basilica and part of the paved, colonnaded street that led from an important city gate to its western entrance. There has been speculation that Stobi was even raised to the rank of *colonia* and named the capital of Second Macedonia when that province was created in the late fourth century after Christ.<sup>6</sup>



ILL. 2. Plan of Episcopal Basilica

sacked by Theodoric in A.D. 479,<sup>7</sup> but seems not to have outlived the next century. Stobi is mentioned in connection with episcopal organization of the late seventh century<sup>8</sup> and the Byzantine Emperor Basil II destroyed a garrison there in A.D. 1014.<sup>9</sup> But neither circumstance would prove the existence of a contemporary town at the site.

## 2. THE NEW EXCAVATIONS

A new series of excavations was begun in May 1970 as a joint project of the University of Texas at Austin and the National Museum of Titov Veles, Yugoslavia. The following is a preliminary report on the work conducted during the first campaign, which extended from May 17 to July 10, 1970.

## 3. THE EPISCOPAL BASILICA

The basilica dedicated by Bishop Philip<sup>10</sup> stood above the ruined early Roman theater from which many of the marbles used in the construction of the church were taken. Its western entrance was from a paved and colonnaded street leading into the heart of the city from the Porta Heraclea. The irregular, almost triangular form of this end of the basilica where the atrium was located was apparently the result of construction within space already clearly defined, chiefly by the street itself (ill. 2).

A colonnaded narthex led to a group of three rooms on the N and gave access both to the central nave and the two side aisles. The broad nave was separated from the aisles by a colonnade and a mulioned screen on each side. The ambo was an elabo-

ately-carved marble structure<sup>11</sup> near the south stylobate, ca. 6.10 m. distant from the chancel screen.<sup>12</sup> The molded base for the chancel screen has been known since the excavations of 1916-18 and parts of the screen itself were discovered. The semicircular apse contains a crypt or confessio whose floor lies 1.75 m. below the level of the presbyterium.

The results of previous excavations and research on the basilica are conveniently summarized on pp. 87-110 of Kitzinger's article already cited<sup>13</sup> and more recently by R. F. Hoddinott.<sup>14</sup> We shall not take up here all the questions raised by Kitzinger, Hoddinott and other scholars, but will discuss only those on which the current excavations have already brought new evidence to bear.

The most important result of the 1970 excavations is the discovery of earlier floor levels in the s aisle and the presbyterium. An earlier building had been suggested by both Egger<sup>15</sup> and Saria,<sup>16</sup> and the possibility of an earlier presbyterium at almost the precise level at which it has now been proved to lie was suggested by Kitzinger.<sup>17</sup>

The evidence near the east end of the s aisle consists of a handsome mosaic whose two partially-preserved registers display intricate geometric patterns created from stone tesserae of a variety of colors (ill. 3).<sup>18</sup> An ivy pattern borders the mosaic on N, E and S. This mosaic is overlaid by the blocks of the s base course, part of the cement bedding for the floor of the last phase of the s aisle, and a nearly square, tile foundation (pl. 87, fig. 1).

overlooked, or not accepted, Papazoglou's arguments; see, e.g., E. T. Salmon, *Roman Colonization under the Republic* (London 1969) n. 321.

<sup>7</sup> Malchus frag. 18; Müller *FHG* IV 125.

<sup>8</sup> Saria (supra n. 4) 50-51.

<sup>9</sup> Cedrenus *CSHB* 2, 709A.

<sup>10</sup> The name is preserved on the lintel of the central doorway between the narthex and the nave. The inscription reads: 'Εμμανουήλ + μεθ' ἡμῶν ὁ θ(εὸς) / ὁ ἀγιώτατος ἐπίσκοπος Φίλιππος + οἰκοδόμη ἐν τῇν ἁγίαν τοῦ θ(εοῦ) ἐκκλη(σίαν). See Balduin Saria, "Neue Funde in der Bischofskirche von Stobi," *JOAI* 28 (1933) 132-133. The drawings of 1970 and all future plans will be based on a True North grid established by astronomical sightings by Grulich in 1970. The Episcopal Basilica and the synagogue-basilica complex of Polycharmos are both oriented NW-SE, but the apses will be considered as facing E for convenience of reference in this and subsequent reports. All levels given will be elevations above sea level.

<sup>11</sup> The ambo is reconstructed in Rudolf Egger, "Die städtische Kirche von Stobi," *JOAI* 24 (1929), drawing between pp. 64 and 65.

<sup>12</sup> The location of the ambo, and its type as well, are paralleled exactly at Amphipolis in Basilica A, which seems to be dated to the 5th century; see *To Ergon* (1967) 54-65, figs. 50,

57. This type of ambo dates generally from the mid-5th into the 6th century; see A. K. Orlandos, *ἡ ξυλόσπετος παλαιο-χριστιανικὴ βασιλικὴ τῆς Μεσογειακῆς Λεκάνης* (Athens 1952-54) 555-563.

<sup>13</sup> Supra n. 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Early Byzantine Churches in Macedonia and Southern Serbia* (London and New York 1963) 161-167 (hereafter Hoddinott). The Basilica of the Quatrefoil Baptistry (*ibid.* 168-169) presumably also served as a bishop's church during the late Empire. See also D. Koco, "Crkva i baptisterium sv. Jovana u Stobi," *Zbornik Arheol. Muzej, Skopje* (1961) 69.

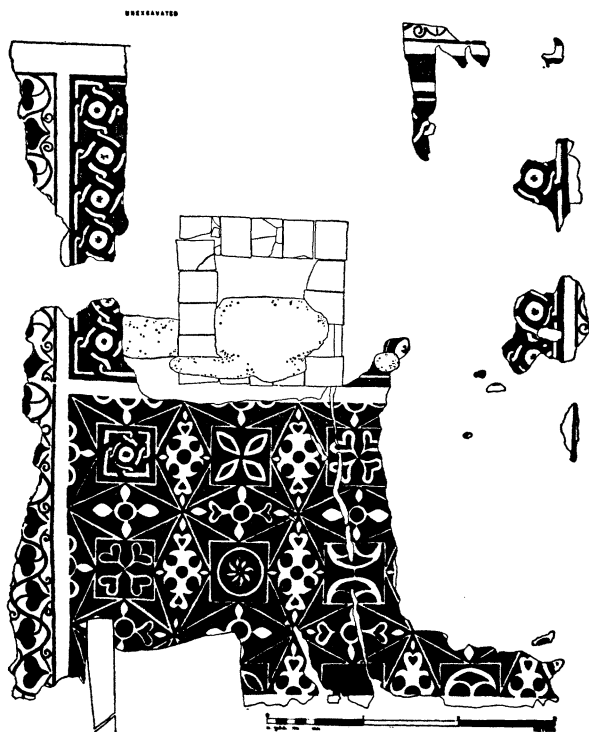
<sup>15</sup> Egger (supra n. 11) 66.

<sup>16</sup> Saria (supra n. 10) 115.

<sup>17</sup> Kitzinger 91-95. Orlandos (supra n. 12) 460-462, figs. 423-424, restored an earlier presbyterium and nave at the level of the crypt.

<sup>18</sup> The E register utilizes a cable design as a border and its center, which is destroyed, may have been an animal scene as in the narthex of the same basilica. Several of the geometric patterns also repeat motifs in the narthex, and the two mosaics must be assumed to have been laid at approximately the same time; cf. especially Hoddinott pls. 41-42. The mosaic found in 1916 in the Cemetery Basilica at Stobi is almost identical; infra Section 7.





ILL. 3. Mosaic in the s aisle of Episcopal Basilica

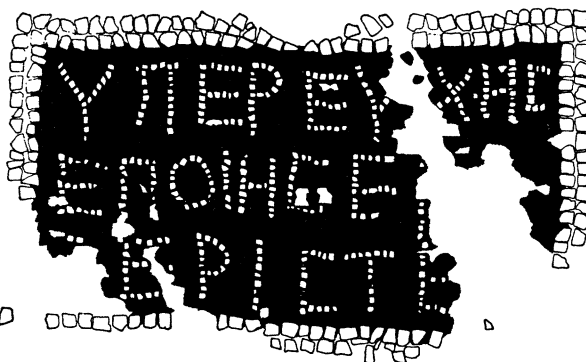
A rectangular area centered along the w side of the w register contains a dedicatory legend that is almost completely preserved (ill. 4). The inscription is three lines of white tesserae set in a blue blackground with a white frame.

ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς  
ἐποίησεν  
[ΙΙ]ερυστε[ρίας]

<sup>19</sup> The expression ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς is found as part of another dedicatory legend in an ecclesiastic mosaic discovered in 1969 in Amphipolis; *To Ergon* (1969) 67-68 and fig. 70. The inscription, which is on the border of a mosaic in the long, narrow room s of the narthex of Basilica I, is rather more modest in tone than the example from Stobi. It reads: + ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς οὐ οἶδεν τὰ ὀνόματα καλιέργησαν + / ἰνδ(ικτιόνος) ἐβδόμη(ι). οὐ is presumably an error for ὦν. ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς is also part of the dedicatory inscription in a late 4th or early 5th century mosaic in the Synagogue at Sardis; David Gordon Mitten, "The Synagogue," *BASOR* 174 (1964) 32-33, fig. 17.

<sup>20</sup> Djordje Mano-Zissi, "Mosaiken in Stobi," *BlatBulg* 10 (1936) 296-297, fig. 186. The two buildings are separated by a broad (3 m.) street. Kitzinger 128, refers to the Peristerias Palace as the Double Apse Building after Mano-Zissi.

<sup>21</sup> The genitive ending -ia from masculine nominatives in -iās is paralleled in patronymics in an ephebic list from Čepigovo (ancient Styberra or Derriopos?): N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 98 (1941-48) 184-185, no. 388, line 26 Νεικόμαχος Αυσία; lines 28/29 Ἀνδων Σωσία; line 40 Σωσίας Αυσία. The nominatives Σωσίας and Αυσίας appear also in the same inscription, lines 48 and 33 respectively. The date of the list, when Neikolaos



ILL. 4. Dedicatory inscription of Peristeria in mosaic in ill. 3

Peristerias, who had the mosaic created because of a vow,<sup>19</sup> is a name previously encountered at Stobi. It occurs in a mosaic in a large residence (Peristerias Palace) immediately e of the sumptuous residence in which so many excellent pieces of sculptures were discovered in the 1930's (Parthenios' Palace).<sup>20</sup> The inscription is in four lines.

Ῥουφίνος Περιστερία  
Περπέτονα Πρώτασις  
Ἐλπίδης Ἰωάννης  
Αὐρηλλιανὸς Περιστερία<sup>21</sup>

The inscription seems to signify a dedication of the room and its embellishments by Rufinus and Aurellianus, sons of Peristerias, in honor of "John: the eternal affirmation of hope."<sup>22</sup>

The mosaics of the Peristerias Palace have been dated to the late fourth or early fifth century, while those in the narthex of the Episcopal Basilica were

son of Apollodoros was gymnasiarch, is recorded as βκς, i.e., the 222nd year of (probably) the provincial era, A.D. 74-75. The Macedonian era is discussed infra, n. 33. The genitive ending -a is known also in Athens as early as the beginning of the 5th century B.C.; K. Meisterhans and E. Schwyzler, *Grammatik der attischen Inschriften* 3rd ed. (Berlin 1900) 120.

We are grateful to Daniel Geagan for several helpful suggestions regarding the inscriptions of Peristerias.

<sup>22</sup> The translation assumes that the omega in πρώτασις is a mistake for omicron and that ἐλπίδης is a misspelling of the genitive of ἐλπίς. The latter could be a proper name; James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* (London 1930) s.v. ἐλπίς, and Pape and Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen* (1884) 355. Ἐλπίδια occurs on another mosaic in the same building at Stobi; Mano-Zissi (supra n. 20). Ἐλπιδώ also occurs as a female name (s.v. Ἐλπιδώ in Benseler), but the genitive would presumably be Ἐλπιδοῦς. Ἐλπίδιος, Ἐλπιδίων and Ἐλπιδοφόρος are also known Macedonian names: Δ. Κανατσούλης, *Μακεδονική Προσωπογραφία* (Thessalonike 1955) nos. 453, 454, 1093. But even if we accepted Ἐλπίδης as a name, Ἰωάννης is an impossible patronymic; the same, of course, is true for

dated, along with the construction of the basilica, to ca. A.D. 500.<sup>23</sup> More recently Mano-Zissi has pointed out that most of the mosaics in Stobi belong to the fifth century.<sup>24</sup> Two recent studies have redated the basilica itself to A.D. 425-450 on the basis of the sculptural decoration.<sup>25</sup>

The presbyterium of the last phase of the basilica was separated from the central nave by a chancel screen set on a molded base of rose-colored marble. The screen closed even the *N* and *S* sides of the presbyterium, and the base courses, for which white marble seats from the theater were used, are preserved all the way to the stepped seating areas for the priests (ill. 2). One slab of the slate floor of this period is preserved in place; it was set into a pinkish mortar preserved over most of the area.

Excavation in 1970 revealed that the small stone bedding for this later floor was laid over an earlier presbyterium with a chancel screen set 1.20 m. further *E* than the later one (pl. 87, fig. 2). The base for the screen is also made of marble seats from the theater, some of which still bear inscribed names, and extends to the *N* stylobate. There was not time to excavate along the *S* stylobate, but we can presume that the screen of that period entirely closed off the nave.

A crumbly, pink mortar bedding for the earlier floor is preserved. The pattern of the *opus sectile* that once covered the bedding could be discerned fairly easily by the impressions left from the marble pieces, some of which were recovered, though not in place (see ill. 2). The design was geometric, chiefly squares, triangles, diamonds and hexagons.

The floor as preserved slopes *E-W* and its surface is irregular; the damage to the floor presumably resulted from an earthquake.<sup>26</sup> The level of some areas of the floor differ by as much as 0.30 m. The terracotta tile foundation for the altar, however, was clearly in use for both of the periods referred

to here. The floor of the first presbyterium seems to have been level, or nearly so, with that of the nave, i.e., ca. 0.24 m. below the floor of the later presbyterium.

A trial excavation at the *SE* exterior corner of the basilica brought to light a large brick-and-mortar section of the upper wall to which a fragment of fresco was still adhering. The fresco, which preserves only red and white panels, was removed and stored in the museum for protection from the elements. A quantity of window pane and a large mullion column (inv. no. A-70-29) testify to the existence of at least one double window on the *E* between the apse and the corner.

This same test also revealed a wall continuing *S* from the basilica at a much lower level. The floor level belonging to the lower wall was not reached in 1970.

A structure of some importance, adjacent to the basilica but at a lower elevation to the *S*, is indicated also by the discovery of a broad, sandstone stairway descending from a point just outside the *S* lateral door of the narthex (pl. 87, fig. 3). The top of the stairway has not yet been cleared. A rubble wall closes the stairway on the *S* in a line oblique to the axis of the basilica. The stairway terminates on a stone-paved floor, or landing, at a level of 145.266 m., i.e., 2.285 m. below the level of the *S* stylobate of the nave. The paving slabs seem to cover a space that is at least partially open. A cistern is possible, but there are other indications of a basement storey for the basilica.<sup>27</sup>

What sort of building lies *S* of the basilica is one of the intriguing questions to be investigated in 1971. Since it is linked to the basilica by walls and at least one stairway, we might suppose that its function was ecclesiastical. One possibility is a baptistery, which is often a separate building near a large and important church.<sup>28</sup> An episcopal

Πρώταις. N. Vulić, who publishes a photograph and text of the inscription (*Spomenik* 98 (1941-48) 44, no. 94), suggests "Ἐλπίδης Ἰωάννης without commentary. A possible explanation is that Aurelianus and Rufinus built the mosaic in the room in honor of John, a deceased member of the Peristerias family. The "hope" in this case would be the Christian hope of resurrection and life after death. If the inscription is not a memorial, it might be liturgical and so refer to John the Baptist, John the Disciple, or even a John of local (i.e. Macedonian) importance in the early church.

<sup>23</sup> Mano-Zissi (supra n. 20) 279ff, 292, 297.

<sup>24</sup> Mano-Zissi, *La mosaïque greco-romaine* (Paris 1963) 293. In a recent study of the frescoes from the Episcopal Basilica, the construction of the church is dated to the 5th century and

the frescoes to the late 5th or very early 6th (before the earthquake of A.D. 518); Jovanka Maximović, "Contribution à l'étude des fresques de Stobi," *CahArch* 10 (1959) 207-216.

<sup>25</sup> Bg. I. Nikolajević-Stojković and G. Stričević, cited in Hodinott, 167.

<sup>26</sup> The same is true of the new sections of mosaic in the *S* aisle.

<sup>27</sup> Not least among which are the two openings in the west wall of the crypt which may connect that area with a room, or rooms, below the presbyterium; Kitzinger 94-96.

<sup>28</sup> See, for example, the large baptistery excavated by D. Pallas *N* of the enormous 5th century basilica at Lechaion; *To Ergon* (1961) 141-148, figs. 142-148.

church, which this basilica clearly was, ought to have a baptistery, and hitherto the only candidate suggested for such a space has been the irregularly-shaped atrium, which seems a most unlikely location.

#### 4. GODS AT STOBI

The most important stone inscription<sup>29</sup> found at Stobi in 1970 was recovered on June 22 from building debris of the Episcopal Basilica above the sandstone stairway just described. The marble block on which the inscription is preserved had been recut and used as a mullion column in the basilica (ill. 5).<sup>30</sup>

I-70-51

H. of letters 0.04/0.045 m.

[-----'Ασκλη]  
 πιῶι καὶ Ὑγιείαι καὶ Τελεσφό  
 [ρ]ωι τὰ ἀγάλματα καὶ στῦλος  
 Θήρων Γάλλος Σκύλαξ διετέ

<sup>29</sup> We are much indebted to Benjamin Meritt for several comments on this inscription; his keen perception is largely responsible for our present understanding of the text.

<sup>30</sup> The drawing was made by Milorad Ćorluka and A. G. Grulich.

<sup>31</sup> There are traces of a letter (Ω?) at the upper left of the stone; therefore: 1) there is room for several words before the beginning of the god's name; 2) one or more additional lines may be missing from the beginning of the inscription; certainly so, if the traces belong to an *omega*.

<sup>32</sup> The statues must represent the three men whose cognomina are recorded here.

<sup>33</sup> The era is most often anonymous in Macedonian inscriptions and in such cases usually refers to the provincial era be-

θη ἔτους ΠΤ [κ]ατὰ δὲ Ρωμαί[ους]  
 [Μα]ξίμωι καὶ [Πα]τέρνωι ὑπά[τοις]

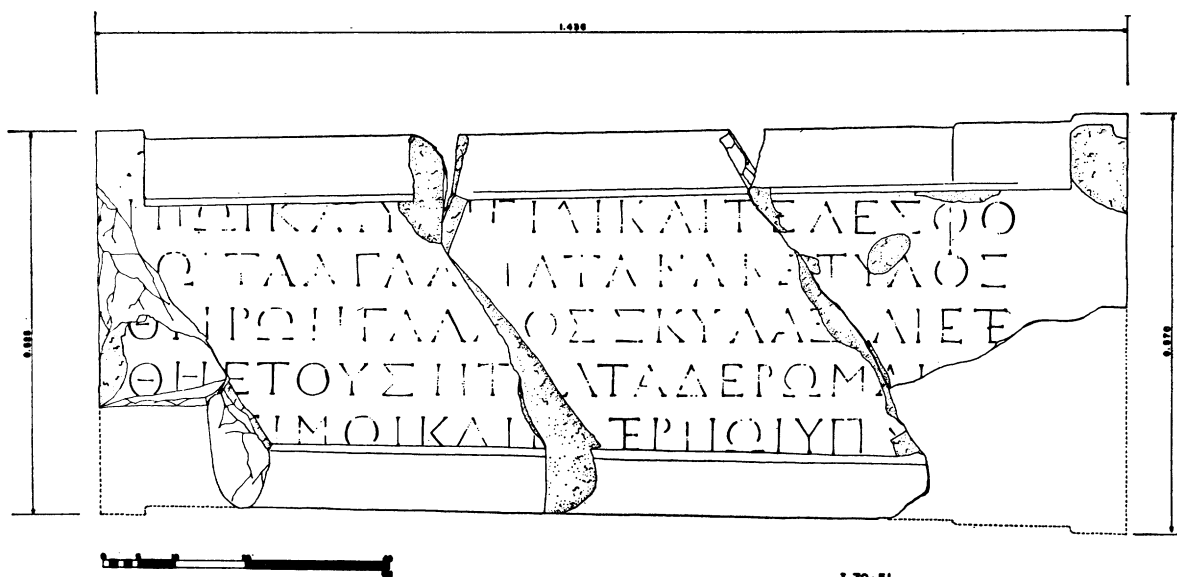
(. . . . . to)<sup>31</sup> Asklepios and Hygieia and Telesphoros: the statues and base, Theron, Gallos, (and) Skylax<sup>32</sup> were set up in the 380th year, but according to the Romans, when Maximus and Paternus were consuls.

The date of the dedication is given in terms both of the Macedonian and Roman calendars. The 380th year refers to the provincial era: 380-148 = 232, i.e., A.D. 232/3, since the Macedonian era began in the fall.<sup>33</sup> That date is confirmed by the cognomina of the Roman consuls recorded in line 6. The consuls of the year A.D. 232/3 were L. Valerius Maximus and Cn. Cornelius Paternus.<sup>34</sup>

The inscription evidently refers to statues of Theron, Gallus and Skylax that were set up in a local sanctuary of Asklepios and his children, Hygieia and Telesphoros. The boy-god Telesphoros is

ginning in 148 B.C.; see Marcus N. Tod, "The Macedonian Era Reconsidered," *Studies Presented to D. M. Robinson* II (1953) 382-397. But the Augustan era, which began in fall, 32 B.C., may be either anonymous or indicated as the ἔτος σεβαστόν. On the two Macedonian eras see, in addition to Tod, Fanula Papazoglou, "Notes d'épigraphie et de topographie macédoniennes, I; sur l'emploi de deux ères macédoniennes," *BCH* 87 (1963) 517-526 and part II, 526-531. The alphabetic numerals for either Macedonian era are almost invariably written, as here, in ascending order; Tod observed that there are only 2 definite exceptions in the 190 inscriptions he discussed in the article cited in this footnote.

<sup>34</sup> Attilio Degraffi, *I fasti consolari dell'impero romano* (Rome 1952) 64-65.



ILL. 5. Drawing of inscription I-70-51



associated with funeral rites at Stobi as early as the first century after Christ.<sup>35</sup>

### 5. THE THEATER

Part of the scene building and the sw side of both orchestra and cavea were excavated by Balduin Saria in 1924-28.<sup>36</sup> Saria also studied the numerous inscriptions found there, including those on the marble seats of the cavea visible at that time.<sup>37</sup> Ejnar Dyggve, who worked at the theater in 1932 and 1934, contributed the drawings for Saria's articles and later discussed the theater himself in a lengthy study published in two parts.<sup>38</sup> Additional work by the Conservation Institute of Macedonia in 1963-1969 and during shorter campaigns in 1968-1969 resulted in the clearing of the central cavea and most of the orchestra. Sections of the outer wall of the cavea were also exposed at that time in a series of eight test trenches.<sup>39</sup>

The first phase of the theater was considered Hadrianic by Saria, who suggested a date of ca. A.D. 300 for the extensive remodeling that marks the second phase. Dyggve dated the two main periods to the early third century after Christ and ca. A.D. 325. The suggested dates were based chiefly on historical considerations and architectural style. The investigations conducted during the 1960's offer no grounds for a revaluation of the date based on stratigraphy or contextual analysis.

Only limited excavation was undertaken in this remarkably well-preserved theater in 1970 (pl. 87, fig. 4). Our efforts were directed chiefly at recording the present state of the remains and the location of the numerous architectural pieces that may still lie in the positions to which they fell. In addition, Elizabeth R. Gebhard, who supervised the work in the theater, and William B. Dinsmoor, Jr., architectural consultant, began a detailed inventory of the architectural pieces.<sup>40</sup>

Test trenches in the orchestra indicated that the earthen floor of the second phase of the theater

lay approximately 137.82 m. above sea level on the s side and no more than 137.9 m. on the n.<sup>41</sup> One test below that floor on the nw side of the orchestra revealed a series of thin layers of earth for a depth of 20-30 cm. that represent the floor levels of the earlier phase. A layer of small stones separated the earthen layers from a late Hellenistic deposit in that trench.

Part of the central *refugio* was cleared (pl. 87, fig. 5). The *refugio* was built into the cavea during the second phase and the green sandstone threshold of its doorway was set into the base molding of the balustrade. A small area of the fill in the sw parodos was also excavated down to a sloping deposit at levels 138.3/139.37 m. The level of the deposit and the debris now visible in its surface suggest that this stratum may represent the time of the destruction of the theater.

A number of tall letters painted in red on the vertical face of the marble balustrade of the cavea were observed in 1970. This discovery initiated a minute examination of the balustrade which, although the inspection is not yet complete, has resulted in the recording of a number of letters and patterns that once adorned the balustrade. The longest continuous series of letters so far discerned are near the center of the cavea and read: - - ] T E P E N T [ 1 ] A [ - - . The letters, which vary in height from 0.23 to 0.26 m., are carefully painted with flared ends. Other decoration includes a curved red band that can be seen at the top of several blocks of the balustrade, 0.14/0.16 m. above the letters. The letters were covered by later patterns painted in green, cream, and other colors, only traces of which remain.

### 6. THE NORTH PALACE

A large residential complex n of the Episcopal Basilica, and entered from the same street, was discovered in the 1930's and some of its rooms partially excavated.<sup>42</sup> In 1970 work was concentrated

<sup>35</sup> See *infra* section 7.

<sup>36</sup> Balduin Saria, "Pozorište u Stobima," *Godišnjak Muzeja Južne Srbije* 1 (1937) 1ff. A shortened version of this monograph appeared in German as "Das Theater von Stobi," *AA* (1938) 81-148.

<sup>37</sup> Idem, "Die Inschriften des Theaters von Stobi," *JOAI* 32 (1940) 1-40.

<sup>38</sup> Ejnar Dyggve, "Le théâtre mixte du bas-empire d'après le théâtre de Stobi et les diptyques consulaires," *RA* (1958) 1: 137-157; 2: 20-39.

<sup>39</sup> No report on the work in the theater during the 1960's has appeared. For a brief announcement of the 1963-65 seasons, see S. Saržoski, "Stobi. Antičko Pozorište," *Arheološki*

*Pregled* 7 (1965) 129.

<sup>40</sup> Dinsmoor, Architect of the Athenian Agora Excavations, was able to join the staff at Stobi for ten days in June. We are indebted to him for his acute observations on various buildings at Stobi and for his more detailed work in the theater.

<sup>41</sup> The latter figure, a terminus, is the elevation of the threshold of the central *refugio*.

<sup>42</sup> All primary records of these excavations, with the exception of a few photographs, were destroyed during World War II. For a brief preliminary report, see Dj. Mano-Zissi, "Die Ausgrabungen in Stobi, 1933-34: Fundbericht," *Starinar* (1936) 162-164.

on a large apsidal hall, oriented NE-SW, and in small rooms to the N bordering what was, during one phase of the building, a colonnaded courtyard (pl. 88, fig. 6).

The earliest structure thus far detected in the area belongs to the second half of the first century A.D.,<sup>43</sup> and is known chiefly from short sections of several walls, some of which were utilized in the later construction. The pebbled floor of one area of this early phase contained a small terracotta amphora<sup>44</sup> that had been set upside down into the paving so that its bottom was nearly flush with the floor (pl. 88, fig. 8). The bottom had been cut for the insertion of coins, but none was found within the vessel when it was removed.

A group of rectangular rooms followed at a date which has not yet been determined, and the complex was eventually enlarged to include the apsidal hall, probably in the early fourth century A.D. The great hall seems never to have been completed; it was, at least, being used for humble purposes in the late fourth or early fifth century A.D. when a fire destroyed the building. The collapse of timbers from the blazing roof structure, either of the hall itself or of an adjacent room, killed a goose and her three goslings near the NE corner of the hall. They died together near a marble mortar in which they evidently were given water to drink.<sup>45</sup> The age (4-6 weeks) of the goslings indicates that the catastrophe probably occurred between mid-April and mid-May.<sup>46</sup>

The floor of the hall was made of packed earth and several large vessels were crushed by the collapse of the brick walls. This suggests an accessory room of some kind, perhaps for storage (and fowl!), though it is just possible that the "hall" was a walled courtyard and the timbers fell from the roofs of the adjacent building.

In the corner of the hall a marble block was re-used as a step to the raised threshold of an entrance into Room 21 to the NW. A handsome bronze lamp<sup>47</sup> was found lying between step and threshold

<sup>43</sup> The only coin (aes III, no. 70-120) associated with this phase of habitation was minted at Stobi in A.D. 81. The obverse bears the heads of Titus and Domitian (pl. 87, fig. 7); on the reverse is a temple and the legend [S]T[OBENS] MVNIC.

<sup>44</sup> Inv. no. C-70-2.

<sup>45</sup> Inv. no. MF-70-46.

<sup>46</sup> We owe this observation to Ivan Mikulčić who supervised excavation in the North Palace.

<sup>47</sup> Inv. no. L-70-4.

<sup>48</sup> Coin nos. 70-72 to 70-77. Coin 70-10, also shown in pl. 88, fig. 10 (left center), was found in the dump created by

(pl. 88, fig. 9), and in the entranceway itself a small hoard of six silver coins was found among the fallen bricks and other debris (pl. 88, fig. 10). The coins all date to the reign of the emperor Gordianus (A.D. 238-244),<sup>48</sup> long before the destruction date of the building, and must represent part of a family treasure.

A deep layer (over 1 m. along the NW wall) of disintegrated brick, once the upper part of the walls of the great hall, covered the destruction debris. Above this layer in the NW, two stratified levels of habitation were discovered that extend through the fifth century and possibly into the sixth. Both showed destruction by fire. The earlier was rather more substantial than the later. Traces of collapsed, mortarless walls made of stone and broken tiles were found on the rammed, yellow clay floor, but no part of the house wall has yet been found in place. The latest dwelling was probably only a hut, its most impressive feature being an unfluted marble column that was apparently reused as a bench.

A quantity of murex shells and some water channels in rooms to the NE indicate a fuller's establishment, also of the fifth century A.D.

Such insubstantial dwellings so near, and apparently contemporary with the flourishing Episcopal Basilica are surprising. Further exploration in this area where there are clearly defined levels of habitation will provide a much-needed stratigraphic control for ceramic analyses at Stobi.

## 7. THE WEST CEMETERY

The only gate as yet excavated at Stobi lies at the SW end of the colonnaded street that leads to the Episcopal Basilica and beyond to the North Palace. The present earthen road leading from the gate to the modern village of Palikura passes, ca. 300 m. from the gate, along the NW side of a basilica that seems to have served as the cemetery church of Stobi in the fifth century A.D.<sup>49</sup> A number of graves were discovered during the excavation of the basilica in 1916; some of these were clearly ear-

prewar excavations at the building.

<sup>49</sup> H. Dragendorff, "Archäologische und kunstwissenschaftliche Arbeit während des Weltkrieges in Mazedonien," *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 54 (1919) 259-270. There is a brief account of the basilica and a plan in Hoddinott 167-168. A second basilica outside the walls of Stobi was also excavated in 1916; it lies ca. 1 km. further SW, not far from the modern bridge that carries the road to Palikura across the river Crna; see Dr. Hald, *Auf den Trümmern Stobis* (Stuttgart 1917) 27-41; Hoddinott 185-186.

lier than the basilica inasmuch as some of the vaulted tombs were incorporated into the foundations. Additional work at the site in 1937 resulted in the discovery of a vaulted subterranean chamber that may have served as a martyr's crypt.<sup>50</sup>

A large part of a mosaic was preserved in the Cemetery Basilica at the time of its excavation but seems to have been destroyed not long afterwards.<sup>51</sup> The published photograph<sup>52</sup> shows a design of geometric patterns nearly identical to the mosaic discovered in the Episcopal Basilica in 1970 (supra, section 3). The two mosaics were surely the products of a single shop, if not of the same master. B. Filow, who was present for at least part of the excavations of the Palikura Basilica (see n. 49), considered the Cemetery and Palikura Basilicas to date to the fourth-fifth centuries.<sup>53</sup>

Excavations in the West Cemetery in 1970 provided additional evidence for decreased community life, or at least some substantial change in customs, in the fifth and sixth centuries. In a test area ultimately 5 x 11.15 m., which was opened ca. 75 m. sw of the Southwest Gate, 18 graves<sup>54</sup> were excavated and none could be dated after the late fourth century A.D.<sup>55</sup> It is important in this connection, however, to note that the test area lies outside that part of the cemetery to be associated specifically with the Cemetery Basilica.

The earliest burials encountered in the West Cemetery in 1970 belong to the early first century A.D. but virgin soil had not been reached at the close of the excavation season. Despite the limited sampling, the marked shift in burial practice from cremation to inhumation in tile graves revealed by the excavations is probably characteristic of the entire cemetery; single interment in tile graves is standard in Greece during the later Roman Em-

pire.<sup>56</sup> What is more, the area tested at Stobi lies just outside one of the principal gates of the city near what must have been an important inter-city road. This area of the West Cemetery is likely to have been one of the more frequented burial grounds of Stobi.

The change in burial practice occurred in the second or early third century A.D.<sup>57</sup> The disturbed tile Grave 3 is the latest grave excavated; it was set into a third century level and could be as late as the fourth century. The other tile graves, nos. 1, 5, 6, 8 and 10, all date to the third or second century A.D. Grave 1 is illustrative. Laconian roof tiles were arranged in a tentlike form above the body after it had been laid in a shallow, rectangular pit (pl. 88, fig. 11). The ends in this case were closed by stones. The grave was probably covered by an earthen mound; we found no trace of stuccoed mounds or other construction above the graves. The burial was that of a child, 5-8 years of age, whose head was to the nw. An illegible bronze coin (no. 70-23) was found in his right hand.

Grave 12 is unique in form among those excavated in 1970. The grave cover is made of roof tiles arranged not like a tent, but in more of a rectangular form; narrow Laconian tiles line the lateral edges. The tiles are above a grave pit which is outlined in black, probably carbon (pl. 88, fig. 12). The pit is oriented NE-SW. In the pit at the NE end was found a large, ceramic casserole dish<sup>58</sup> of the first century A.D.; it contained a cremation burial and two flasklike glass unguentaria (pl. 89, fig. 13).<sup>59</sup> Burnt skeletal remains were also scattered the length of the grave in a rectangular pit (width 0.45 m.) that is nearly centered within the larger pit (ca. 1.2 m. x 2.52 m.).

Seven other cremation burials were excavated,<sup>60</sup>

<sup>50</sup> K. Truhelka, "Archeološke beleške iz južne Srbije," *Glasnik Škopskog Naučnog Društva* 3 (1927) 78-81, figs. 5-6.

<sup>51</sup> B. Filow, "Altchristliches aus Mazedonien," *Studien zur Kunst des Ostens* (Festschrift for J. Strzygowski) (Vienna 1923) 33.

<sup>52</sup> Dragendorff (supra n. 49) 158.

<sup>53</sup> Filow (supra n. 51) 34.

<sup>54</sup> One other tile grave (no. 8) was found here but not excavated because most of it extended into the scarp. Two other graves were found w of the Cemetery Basilica (nos. 7 and 9); only Grave 7 was excavated.

<sup>55</sup> A rubble wall (no. 3) may very well be the tomb monument for Grave 2. Wall 2, a similar construction, may also prove to be above, or partially above, a grave. Neither wall has yet been dismantled; both belong to the late 3rd or 4th century after Christ.

<sup>56</sup> For a recent discussion of tile graves and other contem-

porary types of burials in Greece see James Wiseman, "Excavations in Corinth, the Gymnasium Area," *Hesperia* 38 (1967) 79-86, and two earlier reports in *Hesperia* 36 (1967) 31-35, 417-422.

<sup>57</sup> There are five examples of simple inhumation, which occurs at all periods in the chief test area; Grave nos. 2, 4, 16, 17, 20. These are inhumations in rectangular pits. It is of some interest to note that such burials produced better preserved skeletal remains than the tile graves.

<sup>58</sup> Inv. no. C-70-61. This coarse, oval casserole dish is similar, but not identical, to one from the Athenian Agora dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century A.D.; Henry S. Robinson, *The Athenian Agora V: Pottery of the Roman Period, Chronology* (Princeton 1959) 42 (no. G 190).

<sup>59</sup> Inv. nos. G-70-15 and 16.

<sup>60</sup> Graves 11, 13-15, 18, 19 and 21.

but none was in a built construction as elaborate as Grave 12. A small pit in which ash, bones and offerings were placed seems standard. Most of the burials are dated by the grave offerings, usually glass and terracotta unguentaria, to the first century A.D.; a few belong to the second century. Only one of these burials, Grave 13, was surely within a vessel (pl. 89, fig. 14). The burial vessel<sup>61</sup> contained a cremated adult and five glass unguentaria.<sup>62</sup>

One of these unguentaria (G-70-18) deserves special mention. This small, milky glass vessel was blown in a mold, and has a short neck with a rounded, flared lip (pl. 89, fig. 15).<sup>63</sup> Its globular body is divided into three horizontal registers, the topmost of which is decorated with egg and dart and the lower with festoons and vine clusters. The middle register, which covers about half the body, has six panels, each of which displays the molded form of a vessel; two hydrias, two oenoches and two craters.

The most remarkable discovery in the West Cemetery in 1970 is associated with Grave 21.<sup>64</sup> In a shallow pit<sup>65</sup> between Graves 12 and 13, but at a slightly lower level than 13, the carbonized remains of a funeral banquet were found along with at least 11 terracotta figurines, 13 glass and ceramic unguentaria,<sup>66</sup> a glass stirring rod (?), 1½ bronze

coins, and a terracotta beaker and bowl.<sup>67</sup> The banquet included at least grapes, peaches, olives and, perhaps, walnuts.

The moldmade figurines were all found in a group at the w end of the deposit, placed, as were all the other funeral offerings, on the ashes of the fire in the pit (pl. 89, fig. 16). A few of the figurines were damaged by the heat, but most of them retained even their bright surface paint. Four types are represented: 1) Europa and the bull, three;<sup>68</sup> 2) a young boy on a horse, two;<sup>69</sup> 3) Telesphoros, four;<sup>70</sup> 4) a bull, two.<sup>71</sup> At least one of the bulls was a single figure (MF-70-42), since the entire back of the animal is preserved and there is no trace of a rider. The other very fragmentary bull, however, may be part of another Europa group; there are several unmended fragments.

Both rider figures are shown in motion to the right. Europa, a draped figure, rides sidesaddle with her hands resting on her knees (pl. 89, fig. 17). Over her chiton she wears a long cloak which has been pulled up onto her head as a hood. The bull's head is turned towards the viewer.<sup>72</sup> Traces of the white paint used as a primer coat on the buff clay are preserved on all the figurines, but the Europa group shows little of the final colors. The bulls have

<sup>61</sup> Inv. no. C-70-62.

<sup>62</sup> Inv. nos. G-70-17 to 20, 25.

<sup>63</sup> H. 0.081 m.; Max. D. of body 0.04 m. The shape is Sidonian; cf. Frederic Neuburg, *Antikes Glas* (Darmstadt 1962) figs. 41-42. The two small bottles, one blue and one white, are nearly identical both in shape and relief decoration with the example published here. Neuburg considers the symbols Jewish and dates the vessels to ca. A.D. 200. The shape is known with other symbols, e.g., pomegranate, a bunch of grapes and a citron, that have been considered Jewish: E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Graeco-Roman Period I: The Archaeological Evidence from Palestine* (New York 1953) 168, fig. 385-386. Amphoras, craters, lekythoi and other vessels, indeed, appear frequently in various types of Jewish art forms, including glass, lamps, coins, mosaics and stone plaques. But even if the small bottle from Stobi is the result of Jewish inspiration, it need not indicate a Jewish burial; cremation was not a Jewish custom, though Goodenough, p. 167, suggests that it might occur under Greek influence. Other examples of such Sidonian bottles with similar relief decoration include two in the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, inv. nos. 167 (blue) and 738 (white), and a blue one in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 29.974. There are three glass rods with looped end like our G-70-14 (infra n. 67) also in the museum in Istanbul. We are grateful to Geraldine Gilligan and Al Wesolowsky for photographs and notes on the examples in Istanbul and Boston.

<sup>64</sup> Only a few scraps of burned human bones were found among the material associated with Grave 21, so it is (barely) possible that no burial is represented by the material itself. That is, the funeral offerings and the banquet described in the

text could conceivably be associated with another burial in the vicinity.

<sup>65</sup> 1.9 m. E-W; 0.85 m. N-S; depth ca. 0.2 m.

<sup>66</sup> C-70-48 to 57, C-70-59; G-70-23 and 24.

<sup>67</sup> C-70-58: a bell-shaped beaker with four wide vertical depressions placed symmetrically around the body; C-70-60, a jug with hemispherical body and base ring; G-70-14, a glass stirring rod (?) or hair pin (supra n. 63).

<sup>68</sup> Inv. nos. MF-70-36, 37, 38.

<sup>69</sup> Inv. nos. MF-70-39, 40.

<sup>70</sup> Inv. nos. MF-70-32 to 35.

<sup>71</sup> Inv. nos. MF-70-42, 43a-b.

<sup>72</sup> W. H. Roscher, *Lexikon zur Mythologie*, s.v. *Europa*, vol. I, 1409-1418, where there is mention also of her worship as Europa-Astarte in Sidon. Demeter Europa had a sanctuary at Lebadea; Pausanias 9.39.4. Numerous representations of Europa riding the bull are known in ancient art from the 6th century B.C. to the 6th century A.D., but I know of no recent study of the iconography; see Otto Jahn, "Die Entführung der Europa auf antiken Kunstwerken," *DenkschrWien* (phil.-hist. Klasse) 19 (1870) 1-54. The most recently published representation of Europa on the bull is a mosaic of the Roman period found at Amphipolis; *To Ergon* (1967) 65, fig. 65. Europa in the mosaic is, as often in both Greek and Roman times, only partially clothed. There are two terracotta figurines in the museum in Dresden showing her clothed, but both appear to be earlier than our new figures; Georg Treu, "Erwerbungen der Antikensammlungen in Deutschland. III. Dresden," *AA* 4 (1889) 157-158; P. Hermann, "Erwerbungen der Antikensammlungen in Deutschland. Dresden. 1894," *AA* 10 (1895) 220-221.



traces of red on the tails, and there are yellow vertical stripes on the neck of one.

The youthful rider appears to be nude except for a chlamys and possibly a hood (pl. 89, fig. 18). He is twisted somewhat to his right and his right hand rests on the horse's flank. The figure is so small in proportion to the horse that he can only be a boy. The horse is prancing; both left hooves are off the ground and the foreleg is raised high. Colors preserved include brown on the mane and tail, pink and bluish-green on the horse's body, and pink on the chlamys.

The rider motif is a common one, especially in the eastern provinces of Rome. The best known type is that of the Thracian Rider<sup>73</sup> of which a number of examples, especially carved in relief on tombstones, are known from the Roman period in Macedonia.<sup>74</sup> The hunter's cult of the Thracian Rider is associated, at least in Bulgaria, with the worship of Asklepios and Hygieia.<sup>75</sup> This fact may be of considerable significance, since four of the figurines in the group under discussion are of Telesphoros, the youthful companion of Asklepios. The inscription concerning the three gods, discussed in Section 4, proves that there was a shrine of Asklepios, Hygieia and Telesphoros at Stobi as late as A.D. 233.

There is also the possibility that the youthful riders represent the Dioskouroi or the Danubian Horseman. The existence of a cult of the Dioskouroi at or near Stobi is confirmed by a relief,<sup>76</sup> and the Danubian Horseman, usually associated with a Mother Goddess figure,<sup>77</sup> is suggested by the presence in this same group of figurines of Europa

and the bull. It may be that our youthful rider represents the fusion of several aspects of different hero cults.

The four figures of Telesphoros show the boy-god in typical costume, a one-piece hooded cloak (pl. 89, fig. 19).<sup>78</sup> In the examples from Stobi, Telesphoros stands on a rectangular base facing full front. The cloaks were brightly painted in yellow, orange, and deep red; black was used for hair, eyes and, with blue and red, for some of the simple patterns on base and hemline of cloaks. The feet were painted black or red.<sup>79</sup>

A number of similar figurines, also with much paint still preserved on the surface, have been found in recent excavations in a cemetery at Amphipolis.<sup>80</sup> Most of those published, however, seem somewhat more elaborate than the new ones from Stobi, and all but one of those illustrated stand on a circular pedestal.

The date of the figurines is indicated by the numerous unguentaria and the ceramic vessels found with them. They were all deposited with the burial in the first century after Christ, probably towards the middle of that century.<sup>81</sup>

#### 8. THE BUILDING COMPLEX OF POLYCHARMOS

Tiberios Klaudios Polycharmos was a prominent and wealthy member of the Jewish community at Stobi. His name has been known since 1931 when a column was found bearing a lengthy inscription dealing with his remodeling of the synagogue at Stobi. The column was found in the forecourt of a Christian basilica where it had fallen from its position in the NE corner of the colonnade.<sup>82</sup> Its origi-

<sup>73</sup> There is a convenient, brief discussion of the Heroic rider-figure in Hoddinott 53-62. See also Stanley Casson, *Macedonia, Thrace and Illyria* (Oxford 1926) 248-54; and G. I. Kazarow, *Die Denkmäler des Thrakischen Reitergottes in Bulgarien* (Budapest 1938); A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović, "Die Denkmäler des thrakischen Heros in Jugoslawien und das Problem des thrakischen Reitergottes," *ArchJugo* 4 (1963) 31-57.

<sup>74</sup> See, e.g., Hoddinott pl. 6. There are several examples in the Museum at Skopje.

<sup>75</sup> N. Vulić, *Spomenik* 98 (1941-48) 281-286; cf. Georges Seure, "Étude sur quelques types curieux du cavalier thrace," *REA* 14 (1912) 145.

<sup>76</sup> The relief was found by Leon Heuzey in the village of Rossamon on the Crna River not far sw of Stobi; *RA* 2 (1873) 39-41; see also A. von Premerstein and N. Vulić, "Antike Denkmäler in Serbien und Mazedonien," *JOAI* 6 (1903) 10.

<sup>77</sup> Hoddinott 58-60.

<sup>78</sup> On Telesphoros and his representations in art see especially W. Deonna, "Telesphore et le 'genius cucullatus' celtique," *Latomus* 14 (1955) 43-74. Also useful for bibliography is G. Q. Giglioli, "Un'ara del chiostro di S. Cecilia in Trastevere," *ArchCl* 3 (1951) 104-106.

<sup>79</sup> Telesphoros was apparently always portrayed barefoot; cf. Deonna (supra n. 78) 46.

<sup>80</sup> *To Ergon* (1958) fig. 79; (1959) fig. 36. Another Telesphoros figure from Amphipolis, acquired in 1904, is in the National Museum at Belgrade: Milivoje Veličković, *Katalog grčkih i rimskih terakota* (Belgrade 1958) 95, fig. 43.

<sup>81</sup> This is an earlier date than most of the examples or epigraphic references to Telesphoros known to Deonna (supra n. 78) 50, where the earliest cited is late 1st century A.D.

<sup>82</sup> J. Petrović, "Stobi 1931," *Starinar* 7 (1932) 81-86, 135-136; and, in greater detail on the inscription, N. Vulić, "Inscription grecque de Stobi," *BCH* 56 (1932) 291-298. The basilica was thought at first to be a synagogue because of the inscription. The presence of imposts decorated with crosses, that seem to have belonged to windows in the apse, and of a Christian tombstone found in a room s of the forecourt, have been generally neglected or assumed to reflect a change in the use of the basilica from synagogue to Christian church; see Kitzinger 131-134, 139-140. But the imposts are more likely to have belonged to the original construction of the basilica whereas the columns, including the one with the inscription of Polycharmos, are clearly spoils from other buildings. Further



nal position, of course, must have been in the synagogue.

The inscription has been discussed often and we shall not undertake here an analysis of the many problems it raises;<sup>83</sup> we shall confine ourselves to the following observations. Polycharmos, who is identified as ὁ πατήρ τῆς ἐν Στόβοις συναγωγῆς, paid for some extensive construction work at the synagogue and attached structures "because of a vow" (εὐχῆς ἕνεκεν); part of the building was explicitly reserved for the use of Polycharmos and his descendants. The inscription has recently been dated to the late third century A.D.;<sup>84</sup> a date, as we shall see, anterior to any phase of the basilica construction.

The Conservation Institute of Macedonia conducted a limited excavation within the basilica and in its vicinity during the 1960's in the course of a restoration project that included the basilica and the building at a lower level s of it. The latter building, known variously as the Summer Palace and the Palace of Polycharmos, was closely associated with the basilica and communicated directly with it via a corridor and stairway at the sw corner of the basilica.<sup>85</sup> Mr. Živojin Vinčić, who directed the work of the Conservation Institute in this architectural complex, and in other buildings nearby, has very kindly provided us with a report on his findings. The following is a brief summary of the most pertinent parts of that report.

1) The "Summer Palace" was older than the basilica and connected with a building located below the basilica.<sup>86</sup>

2) A mosaic floor in one large room of the building below the basilica was revealed by Vinčić in excavations below the nave. The mosaic was poorly preserved and a large portion of it was removed by Vinčić for restoration.

investigation by Mr. Živojin Vinčić during the 1960's confirms the Christian nature of the basilica (infra). In recent publications, the basilica was considered a 5th century synagogue by Rachel Wischnitzer, *The Architecture of the European Synagogue* (Philadelphia 1964) 7-9 and, correctly, a Christian church by Hoddinott 179-181 and by Martin Hengel (infra n. 83) 149-150.

<sup>83</sup> The most recent work on the inscription is the detailed study by Martin Hengel, "Die Synagogeninschrift von Stobi," *ZNTW* 57 (1966) 145-183. Cf. J. and L. Robert, "Bulletin épigraphique," *REG* 81 (1968) 478-479.

<sup>84</sup> Hengel (supra n. 83) 150-159.

<sup>85</sup> Petrović, *Starinar* 8-9 (1933/34) 175. Kitzinger 140, was troubled because the published plan of the building shows no stairway and the difference in level between basilica and residence is so great. (The difference between the paved floor of

3) Vinčić dated the mosaic floor and the first phase of the "Summer Palace" to the early fourth century on the basis of his observation of the ceramic finds, the mosaics, and the discovery of a coin of Licinius. He considered the complex likely to be the synagogue and residence of Polycharmos.

4) The construction of the basilica at a higher level was coupled with a rebuilding of the residential area to the s, including the laying of the mosaic in the *triclinium*.

5) The new mosaic carries motives well known in early Christian art and the building provides direct access to the atrium of a (Christian) basilica; therefore, the "Summer Palace" might more correctly be named the "rectory." Vinčić dates this rebuilding to 450-500, but chiefly on the basis of the style of the mosaic.<sup>87</sup>

6) Sometime before the reign of Justinian, the entire complex was badly damaged. The rebuilding involved only a few alterations of the original plan, the most important of which were: a) decreased size of the forecourt of the basilica and abandoning of its earlier longitudinal axis; b) construction of rubble walls between the columns of the nave.

7) A few mud and rubble walls were found above the *triclinium* and the parts of the basilica indicating habitation, perhaps seasonal, during the post-urban phase of the city (late sixth-seventh century A.D.).<sup>88</sup>

The excavations in 1970 were concentrated within the area of the nave and the n aisle of the basilica. Only a small area of undisturbed fill between the floor of the basilica and the earlier mosaic floor could be excavated, but we were also able to test deposits below that mosaic floor.<sup>89</sup> The work resulted in the discovery of walls belonging to a still

the nave and the mosaic floor of the triclinium is, in fact, 2.47 m.; see ill. 7.) The recent work of the Conservation Institute of Macedonia has, however, confirmed the existence of the stairway, according to a communication from Vinčić.

<sup>86</sup> A sandstone threshold is still in place that led from the south colonnade of the peristyle in the residence to a room directly below the doorway that leads from the narthex to the s aisle of the basilica. The s wall of the basilica is laid partly over the threshold.

<sup>87</sup> Kitzinger, 138, also dated the mosaic to the mid-5th century. But the motifs of the mosaic are also common in Jewish art; infra and n. 104.

<sup>88</sup> These are known chiefly from earlier excavation; Petrović, *Starinar* 8-9 (1933/34) 253.

<sup>89</sup> Area supervisors here were Prof. E. Mott Davis and Miss Phyllis Della Croce.

earlier building and in the clarification of a number of aspects of the history of the entire complex.

**Earliest Deposit.** Virgin soil was not reached in any of the areas tested.<sup>90</sup> There was time and opportunity, in fact, to begin only one test below the level of Roman occupation. In a small trench near the E end of the N aisle, a deposit consisting only of pottery of the Late Hellenistic period was found (ill. 6 and Section B-B, ill. 7). The deposit began just below the bottom of the later Wall 2 (ill. 6) and continued for over 0.7 m. to a level of 134.362 m., where we ceased digging for the season. The pottery was chiefly of the fine gray fabric well known in Hellenistic Macedonia<sup>91</sup> but included also a number of imported wares from further S. No architectural remains were associated with this early pottery, but the area tested at this depth was only ca. 1.40 m. x 0.80 m.

**Building One.** A paving of flagstones was found below the nave in front of column N-3 at an elevation of 136.7 m. (ills. 6 and 7). A wall made of rough-hewn blocks and concrete is set into this paved surface nearly on the axis of the basilica; the wall (0.6 m. wide) is preserved to ca. 1.25 m. above this surface (pl. 90, fig. 20). Part of the E face only of a wall, abutting but not bonded into this wall, was cleared further E; the second wall extends to the N and would pass under the W edge of column N-4. Still another wall further E (Wall 3) abuts the E-W wall, and here there is plaster preserved on both walls at their juncture. But Wall 3 is clearly later since it is bonded into Wall 2, the N wall of the room of the mosaic in Building Two (ill. 6).

The earliest wall of those mentioned so far is the one approximating the axis of the basilica. The setting trench for the wall was dug into the level of the flagstone pavement. The flagstones are set in a thin layer of earth above a stratum of gravel that probably represents a dumped leveling fill. We were unable, however, in 1970 to test the depth of the gravel deposit and to determine whether or not

it lies above a Hellenistic level. It is equally clear that at least two, possibly three habitation periods are represented by the deposits lying N of the wall: 1) a destruction level probably of the first century A.D. found near the E end and only partially investigated, which may be earlier than the wall; 2) the wall and the flagstone pavement; 3) a thin stratum of burning, pottery sherds, and a discontinuous layer of fresco fragments at an elevation of ca. 137.2 m. Further excavation and study will be required to clarify the stratigraphy and the historical relations of the walls.

The ceramic context associated with the layer of fresco fragments indicates a date in the third century A.D. Two coins of the second-third century were found in this deposit. They were both minted in Stobi.<sup>92</sup>

Among the fragments of fresco were a number of pieces bearing letters and framing lines in bright red paint on a white background. Some of these were pieced together and it became apparent that only one legend was recorded, but repeated several times (pl. 90, fig. 21):

Πολύχαρμος  
ὁ πατήρ  
εὐχῆν<sup>93</sup>

"Polycharmos the father,  
(in accordance with) a vow."

The framing lines are of different widths and some are painted at angles to the lines of letters.<sup>94</sup> It is not yet clear what pattern was made by the lines, but one interesting possibility is that the dipinto was repeated in the triangular points of a large Star of David.<sup>95</sup>

"Polycharmos the father" can hardly be other than Tiberios Klaudios Polycharmos, "the father of the synagogue in Stobi," whose name occurs on the marble column found in 1931 (supra, beginning of Section 8). The new dipinto, which probably decorated a wall, presumably refers to construction

<sup>90</sup> But see infra regarding the gravel deposit below the level of the flagstones of Building 1.

<sup>91</sup> I. Mikulčić, "Stobi," *Arheološki Pregled* 8 (1966) 113-14; M. Jovanovic, "Kale-Krševica," *Arheološki Pregled* 8 (1966) 58-59.

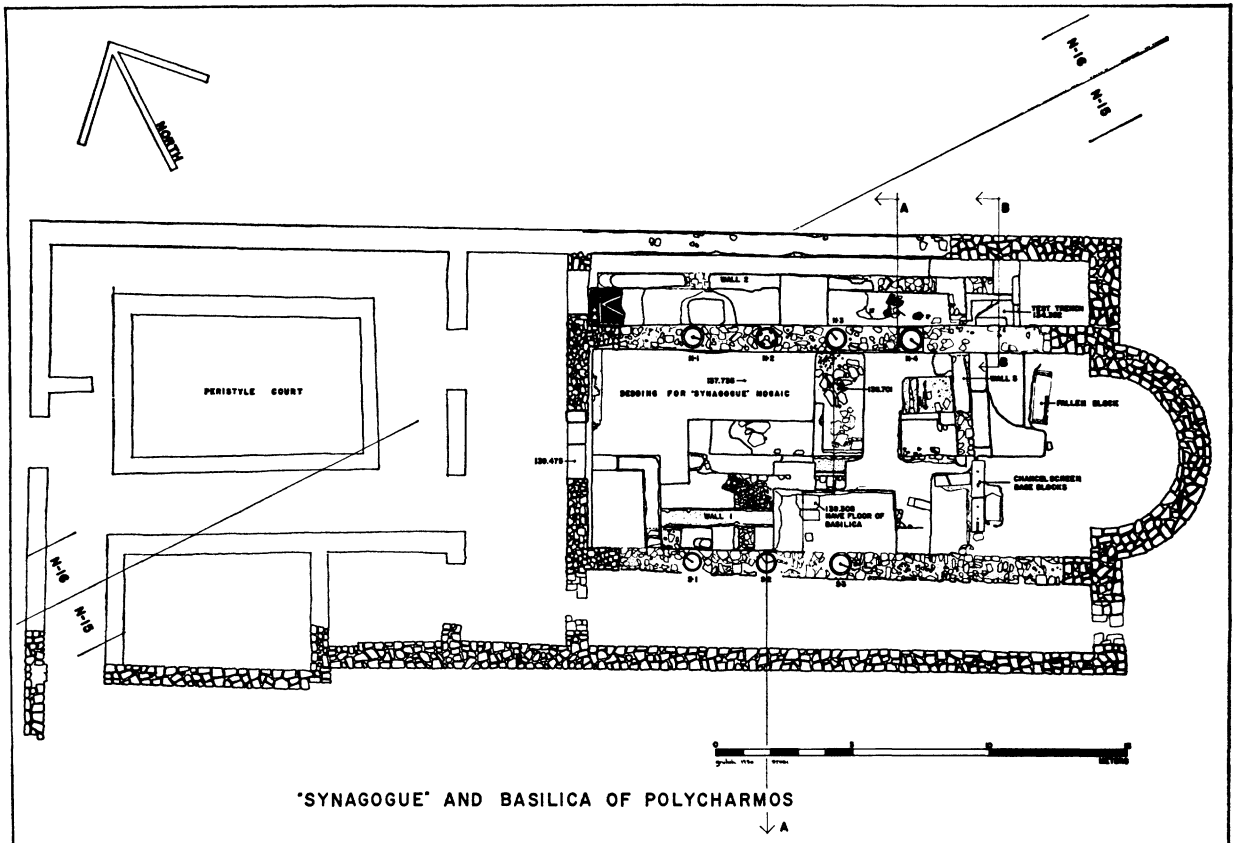
<sup>92</sup> Coin 70-33 (aes III): ob.-ANTONINUS PF AUG; bust to r. rev: [MV]NICIP STOBENS; Victoria marchant. Coin 70-38 (aes III): obv: M. AURE AN[TO]NINUS; laureate bust to r. rev: [S]TOBEN MUNIC.

<sup>93</sup> εὐχῆν occurs at the end of Anatolian inscriptions "with ἀνέθηκεν or ἀνέστησεν understood"; Moulton and Milligan, s.v. εὐχῆ. The accusative form is also common in Thracian

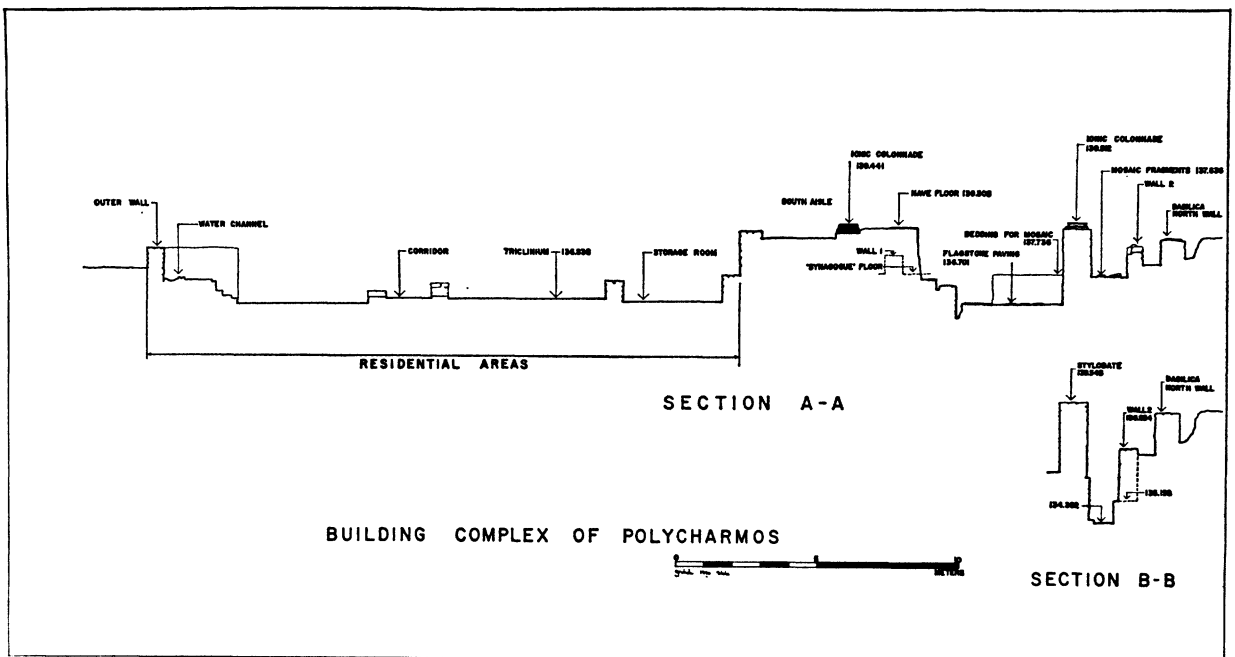
inscriptions concerning the heroic rider; Seure (supra n. 75) 144, esp. example A.u) in n. 1 where εὐχ(ῆν) is followed by ἀν(έθηκεν). But κατά understood, meaning "in accordance with," seems at least possible in many of these instances; cf. Moulton and Milligan, s.v. κατά II.2.

<sup>94</sup> The height of letters varies not only from group to group, but even sharply within a single word. The variation is between 0.004 m. and 0.02 m.

<sup>95</sup> We are indebted to Mr. Dj. Georgievski both for this suggestion and for his careful work with the frescoes in the field and laboratory.



ILL. 6. Plan (partial) of Basilica and Synagogue of Polycharmos



ILL. 7. Sections through Building Complex of Polycharmos

work funded by Polycharmos. It is likely that the inscribed column, which also dates to the third century according to Martin Hengel,<sup>96</sup> and the fresco refer to the same construction and stood in the same building complex (Building One).

Another dedication to be associated with what we may now refer to as Synagogue 1 is a copper plaque found just below the tile underpinning of the mosaic floor for Building Two near the center of the nave (pl. 90, fig. 22).<sup>97</sup> The rectangular plaque had been attached to whatever offering was involved by means of nails. The letters were cut by striking from the front with a small flat chisel. The inscription reads:

Ποσιδ  
ονία Θεῶ(ι)  
Ἀγίω(ι)  
εὐχῆν

"Posidonia to Holy God  
(in accordance with)<sup>98</sup> a vow."

*Building Two.* Walls 1 and 2 (ill. 6) are the s and n walls respectively of a large room with a mosaic floor. The e wall was Wall 3 which, as we have seen, seems to have been in existence in a later phase of Building One. The w wall of this room probably was on the line of the later wall that separates the narthex from the nave of the basilica, inasmuch as the mosaic still in place in the ne corner of Building Two has a framing border adjacent to the wall (pl. 90, fig. 23). The interior dimensions of the room as described are ca. 7.85 m. x 13.3 m. The room is not, however, properly rectangular; Walls 2 and 3 form an oblique angle.

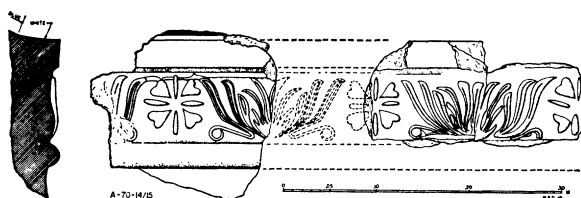
The floor was covered by a mosaic for its entire length, and from the n wall to a line 1.25 m. distant from the s wall (1) where a layer of flat stones may have served as a foundation for a bench along the wall. The s wall was interrupted on the w by the wall of a room that was cut through almost on its axis by the e foundation of the narthex. There is a threshold on the n that is nearly in line with the threshold from the s corridor of the peristyle of the

"Summer Palace"; the corridor probably led into this very room.

Most of the mosaic that lies below the central nave of the basilica was removed for reconstitution, but parts of the mosaic, poorly preserved, are still in place below the n aisle. The bedding for the mosaic, at an elevation of 137.735 m., is of a pink mortar laid on a layer of broken terracotta roof tiles and bricks. The floor is only slightly higher than the preserved top of the s wall of Building One (pl. 90, fig. 24). Pottery sherds found in the tile underpinning for the mosaic bedding and a few cms. below it point to a construction date early in the fourth century A.D.

A rectangular brick and concrete foundation stands against the e wall on the axis of the room. The walls of the room consisted of a stone and mortar socle with an upper part of mud brick, at least in its later phase. The interior walls were covered with fresco, numerous fragments of which were recovered both in the 1960's and in 1970.<sup>99</sup> The patterns on the frescoes are all geometric and painted in a variety of bright colors.

Windows, doors and other interior features were adorned with decorative stucco moldings (ill. 8).<sup>100</sup>



ILL. 8. Decorative molding in stucco A-70-14,15

Part of the room was covered with a hard, buff to light-orange plaster into which a number of shallow graffiti in Greek were cut.<sup>101</sup>

The elaborate decor of the room sets it apart from ordinary chambers. Since it lies not only partly above a synagogue complex, but was even tied to it structurally at one period by its e wall, we might suppose that it represents the successor of the building mentioned in the inscription of Polycharmos.

probably located at the bottom of a fresco panel that stood in a plane recessed from the plane of the lower wall.

<sup>101</sup> Several pieces of the plaster with graffiti have been found. A continuous text seems to be involved, but comments must await further study of the fragments. Numerous graffiti in yellow plaster have been found also in the Synagogue at Sardis; Mitten (supra n. 19) 33.

<sup>96</sup> Supra n. 83.

<sup>97</sup> I-70-61; L. 0.079 m.; W. 0.047 m.; H. of letters 0.006-0.01 m.

<sup>98</sup> See supra n. 93.

<sup>99</sup> Thirty-one large wooden trays were filled with fragments recovered from this complex in 1970 alone.

<sup>100</sup> The drawing in ill. 8, which involves a partial restoration, is by William B. Dinsmoor, Jr. The molding shown was



The large room just described is certainly appropriate for the synagogue proper. The foundation at the E wall, facing toward Jerusalem, would make a suitable support for the Ark of the Law,<sup>102</sup> and benches for seating along a lateral wall were standard in ancient synagogues.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, the change from a floor paved with flagstones in Building One to the mosaic floor of Building Two is precisely the type of change observed in synagogues in Palestine. And that structural change occurred in the late third to early fourth century A.D.<sup>104</sup>

The building adjacent on the S may indeed have served as a rectory during the period of the Christian basilica as Vinčić has suggested (beginning of Section 8). But that building was a part of the architectural complex of Building Two and, if our identification of the latter as a synagogue is correct, we might expect to find there some evidence pointing to its use by Jews. The mosaic in the triclinium is suggestive. While it is true that the motifs of the mosaic (birds and other wild life among trees, flowers and other plants) are familiar in Christian structures, they are also frequent subjects in mosaics of Palestinian synagogues.<sup>105</sup>

*Building Three.* Synagogue 2 was destroyed before the end of the fourth century and a three-aisled, apsidal basilica with forecourt was built above its ruins near the end of that century or early in the fifth century.<sup>106</sup> The original floor level of the

basilica was marked by a hard, brown earth layer at an elevation of 138.959 m., that is, at about the level of the bottom of the Ionic column bases still in situ on the stylobates of the nave. There is a marked difference in construction visible also between the stylobate and the walls built between the column bases (pl. 90, fig. 25). Both stylobate foundations were laid to a great depth. The N stylobate cuts completely through Wall 3.

The bases, originally five on each side (ill. 6),<sup>107</sup> are all spoils from other buildings. There are three bases in place on the S stylobate and four on the N; the interaxial distance is 2.7 m. Part of the marble base course for the chancel screen is also still in place.

At some later period, probably still within the fifth century, the intercolumniations of the nave colonnades were closed by rubble walls and the floor raised to an elevation of 139.308 m. Some of the slate paving slabs of that floor have been left in place near column S-3.

All the available evidence points to the use of the basilica as a Christian church. The circumstances under which a site holy to the Jewish community in Stobi passed under Christian control in the late fourth or early fifth century remain to be determined.

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<sup>102</sup> E. L. Sukenik, *Ancient Synagogues in Palestine and Greece* (London 1934) 50-53; Carl H. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos VIII, pt. 1: The Synagogue* (New Haven 1956) 20-25.

<sup>103</sup> Sukenik (supra n. 102) 58.

<sup>104</sup> Goodenough (supra n. 63) 238-239.

<sup>105</sup> The mosaics in the triclinium are illustrated in Mano-Zissi (supra n. 20) figs. 171, 183-184. For parallels in mosaics in synagogues see Goodenough (supra n. 63) 239-264 and his discussion of birds in *Jewish Symbols in Graeco-Roman Period VIII: Pagan Symbols in Judaism* (New York 1958) 22-70. One other piece of evidence might be cited here. A rectan-

gular bronze plaque with two nail-holes, bearing a seven branched candelabra (menorah) and the name Εὐσταθίου was found in the 1930's in a deposit below the floor of one of the rooms E of the forecourt of the basilica. The plaque, now in the National Museum at Belgrade, is illustrated in Lj. B. Popović, Dj. Mano-Zissi, M. Veličković and B. Jeličić, *Antička Bronza u Jugoslaviji* (Belgrade 1969) no. 343.

<sup>106</sup> The dates given here are based on the initial examination of contextual material from only a small area and are, therefore, provisional.

<sup>107</sup> Earlier plan shows only two columns per stylobate; see e.g., Hoddinott 179-181.





FIG. 1. Mosaic in s aisle of Episcopal Basilica from NE



FIG. 3. Stairway s of narthex from SE

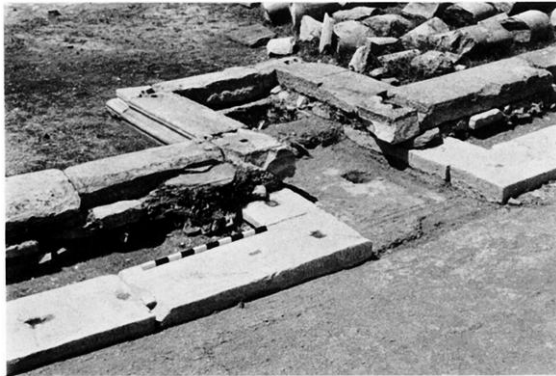


FIG. 2. Bases for chancel screens in Episcopal Basilica from SE



FIG. 5. Cavea from skene; Central Refugio on right



FIG. 7. Coin 70-120 minted in Stobi. Scale 1:1

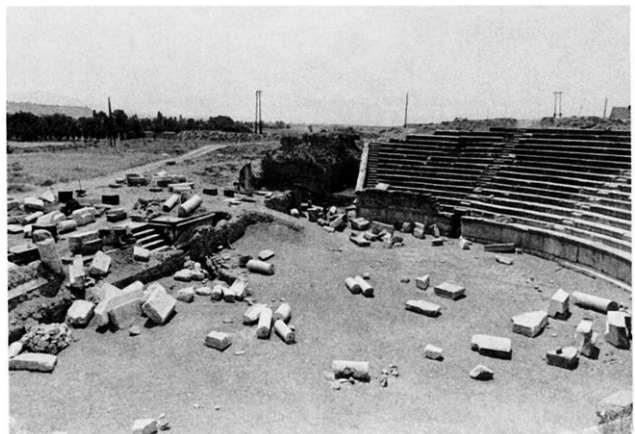


FIG. 4. Theater from NE



FIG. 6. Apsidal hall or court from N



FIG. 8. Amphora in cobbled paving from sw



FIG. 12. Grave 12 from N



FIG. 10. Silver coins from North Palace



FIG. 11. Tile Grave 1 from E



FIG. 9. Bronze lamp L-70-4





FIG. 13. Grave 12 after removing tiles, from N



FIG. 14. Cremation burial, Grave 13, from W



FIG. 15. Glass unguentarium G-70-18



FIG. 16. Terracotta figurine group from s



FIG. 17. Europa and the Bull; terracotta figurine MF-70-37



FIG. 18. Youthful rider; terracotta figurine MF-70-39



FIG. 19. Telesphoros. Terracotta figurine C-70-32



FIG. 20. Flagstone paving and wall below mosaic floor from NE



FIG. 24. Basilica's stylobate (upper center) behind the wall of Building Two; wall of Building One visible at lower left

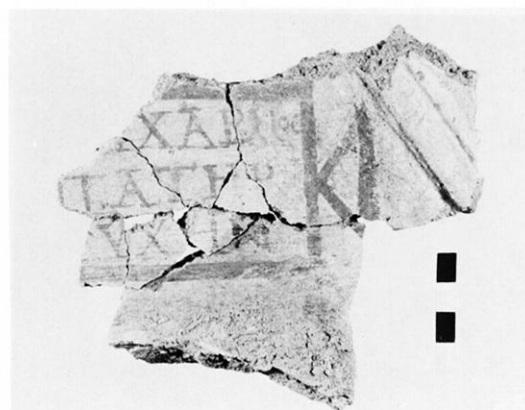


FIG. 21. Two fragments of Polychamos fresco

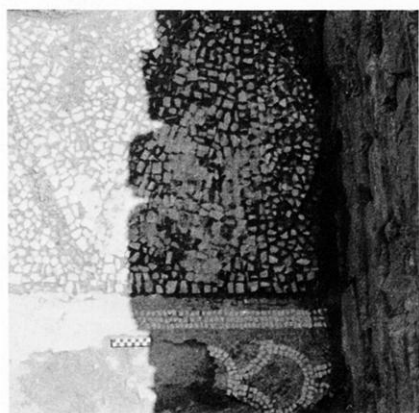


FIG. 23. Mosaic below Basilica from w



FIG. 22. Inscribed copper plaque I-70-61



FIG. 25. Basilica's stylobate from N